

R E M A R K S

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter set forth in claims 1-11, pending amendments to overcome the § 112 rejections. In response to the pending Office Action, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 7 to further clarify the subject matter of the present disclosure. Claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled, without prejudice.

Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art for the reasons set forth below.

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement provision, and under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

It is asserted that claims 1 and 7, while being enabled for hydrocarbon-based gases, are not enabled for all raw material gases. As a result, the claims are incomplete for omitting essential elements. Claim 9 is considered indefinite because the phrase “a program of computer-controlling the purging step of purging” is dependent on claim 7, which is a method claim. Claim 10 is indefinite because the phrase “a recording medium carrying the program according to claim 9 which can be processed by a computer” is indefinite because the wording of the claim is ambiguous.

In response, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 7 to add the limitation, “wherein the raw material gas comprises hydrogen and carbon”, to overcome these rejections. The Examiner indicated in the Office Action and in a telephone conversation on March 10, 2011 that this limitation will render the claims allowable. In addition, as claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled, the § 112 rejection is now moot.

Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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